

**REMARKS**

The present Amendment is in response to the Examiner's Final Office Action mailed June 21, 2007. Claim 11 is cancelled, claims 1-3 are amended and new claims 12-14 are added. Claims 1-10 and 12-14 remain pending in view of the above amendments.

Please note that the following remarks are not intended to be an exhaustive enumeration of the distinctions between any cited references and the claimed invention. Rather, the distinctions identified and discussed below are presented solely by way of example to illustrate some of the differences between the claimed invention and the cited references. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks. For the Examiner's convenience and reference, Applicant's remarks are presented in the order in which the corresponding issues were raised in the Office Action.

**Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103**

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 2, 5 and 7-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over *Chiou* (U.S. Patent No. 6,125,535). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection at least on the grounds that the references – either individually or in combination – fail to teach or suggest each and every element of the rejected claims.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the conductors that correspond to individual lead frame connectors are internally stabilized using a conductive structure prior to singulation. Figures 2b and Figure 5 illustrate one example of how the conductive structure 40 internally stabilizes the individual lead frame connectors prior to singulation.

*Chiou*, however, fails to teach or suggest this requirement. Figure 4 of *Chiou*, for example, illustrates that there is no conductive structure that internally stabilizes the individual lead frame connectors. Instead, *Chiou* relies on carriers 11, 12, 21, 22, which are external. More particularly in *Chiou*, the contacts 10, 20 extend between the first carrier 11, 21 and the second carrier 12, 22 (see col. 3, ll. 42-50) and the contacts 10,

20 are therefore not internally stabilized with any type of conductive structure as required by claim 1.

Claim 1 has also been amended to require punching the conductive structure from each individual lead frame connector. Punching the conductive structure from each individual lead frame connector removes the conductive structure and serves to separate the individual lead frame connectors from each other. See Specification ¶[0033].

By citing to col. 2, lls., 49-52 in rejecting claim 2 (elements of which have been incorporated into claim 1), the Office Action suggests that this requirement is taught by *Chiou*. Applicant respectfully disagrees. This portion of *Chiou* teaches that in "the insert molding step, the contact base 4 is molded onto the first and second contact carrier strips 1, 2 thereby enclosing the securing sections 103, 203 of the contacts 10, 20. This portion of *Chiou* fails to teach or suggest punching the conductive structure from each individual lead frame connector as alleged in the rejection of claim 2.

Therefore, molding the contact base 4 onto the first and second contact carrier strips 1, 2 fails to teach or suggest the requirements of claim 1, including punching the conductive structure from each individual lead frame connector. Rather, the contact base 4 is simply molded onto the carrier strips and no internally stabilizing conductive structure is punched from the individual lead frame connectors.

In other words, the arrangement of elements in claim 1 requires that the conductive structure internally stabilize the conductors in the individual lead frame connectors. The conductive structure is then punched from each individual lead frame connector after the insulating casing is formed during the insert injection molding process. *Chiou* fails to teach these requirements, including punching the conductive structure from the lead frame connector.

For at least these reasons, *Chiou* fails to teach or suggest each and every limitation of claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is therefore patentable over the cited art. The dependent claims are allowable at least for this reason.

**Allowed Subject Matter**

The Examiner has indicated that claims 3-4 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the careful review of these claims. In response, Applicant presents new claims discussed below.

**New Claims**

Claim 12 has been presented by this amendment. Claim 12 includes all of the limitations of previously presented claim 1 along with the limitations of claim 4. Because the Examiner indicated that claim 4 would be allowable, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 12 is allowable for at least the same reasons. The dependent claims 13-14 are allowable for at least the same reasons.

**Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe the claims as amended are in allowable form. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, or which may be overcome by an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of October, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

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